Bennington Aug 21st 1843

Dear Mother

It is almost the first time I could sit down & call it my own to devote to others than my own family & flock since I parted with Sister Julia at Troy. Lucy was so ill & the heat so oppressive that we went to Waterford with her the same afternoon. where we found a little fresh air & the next day succeeded in getting her home. We employed no Physician — but applied our own skill after the Thomsonian mode of practice — which under the blessing of God arrested the disease (severe case of Scarlet fever) on the 3d day. She has almost literally peeled from head to foot but is now entirely recovered healthy & bright. She is a charming child — a great comfort to us. She has talked much about Aunt Julia since she left. May we have grace given us to train her up in the nurture & admonition of the Lord. We all enjoyed sister S's visit very much. The topics of our conversation were mainly about Christ & his church & was interesting to us all to find that we held so many precious truths of Christ & him crucified in common along our journey Heaven —

ward. Sister has already doubtless given you a detailed account of her visit here & if she enjoyed it as we did she was more than compensated for the trouble & expense it cost her. We were much pleased with the description she gave of Preston's wife & prospects & it did our hearts good to hear that you & Mother were enjoying a contented cheerful & happy old age. The Lord grant that your declining years may be cloudless and & finally set us in the calm & serene sky of sunnier.

Oh how kind & gracious is God who for the sake of our ever Blessed Redeemer directs all the steps of our pilgrimage in loving kindness & orders all the circumstances of our life in tender mercy. The bright & shades of this changing world are all intended by him & if rightly improved by us to fit us for an unchangeably brighter better holier world. Why should we ever distrust the Lord. To sit down & record merely the instances of his goodness & love in which I myself have experienced would take much time it would require! More & more dear to me are his counsels & more & more precious to my soul is the Great Salvation He has provided for me in Christ Jesus. We have been much of late with the sick & dying. Till within 3 weeks since I had not been called upon to attend a funeral for 18 months since that time I have buried 3. After service a week ago yesterday I was called in great haste to baptize Mrs Sheard of Hoosick. I went immediately found her in the last stage of consumption but mind clear. She appeared perfectly resigned watching & waiting for the Master to call her hence. After the baptismal service she says Mr Preston I want you to come & bury me. I told her I would. She wanted the burial service read at her funeral. I told her she should have a christian burial. But as I was engaged till wednesday this was sunday evening I would endeavor to be at Hoosick by wednesday noon. Looking up to her friends she says Do you think the corpse can be kept till wednesday as I expect to die to night. Hearing this I told her to give herself no uneasiness as I would alter my arrangements & be at Hoosick on tuesday in sufficient time for her interment. She lived 24 hours longer than she expected & was buried at 1 o'clock on Wednesday. Heaven never appeared to me so near the blessed religion of Christ never more precious than when standing by the death bed of that saint. Instinctively I exclaimed Can this be the death which a christian may die? Blessed be God I find it so in his word. But never before had I seen it verified & I thank him for permitting me to witness such a triumph of the Gospel. I have not heard recently from Rupert. Your friends here are all well. Mrs Hancock whom you will recollect has returned from the West a widow & now lives with her son just across our garden. Mr Buckly Squires & Wife send much Love. Mrs Martyn also. Mrs Preston joins in much Love to you & all our friends in Somerville. They are becoming so numerous we could particularize. All

there is one thing I like to have forgotten. You must not expect to see us this fall. It would give us unfeigned pleasure to visit you – see Cousin all – but we must part from it for a time yet The Lord bless you – Write soon

your affectionate son
A. O. Preston

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